

TENNESSEE GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
FISCAL REVIEW COMMITTEE



**FISCAL NOTE**

**HB 1478 – SB 1572**

January 31, 2016

**SUMMARY OF BILL:** Repeals the felony enhancement for third and subsequent convictions for simple possession or casual exchange of a controlled substance.

Enhances a sixth or subsequent driving under the influence (DUI) offense to a Class C felony.

Removes the probation requirement for DUI offenders to remove litter. Repeals Tenn. Code Ann. § 55-10-420, which established the procedures and requirements of the litter removal program.

Requires prior convictions for alcohol-related vehicle offenses, including those committed out-of-state, to be counted as prior convictions for the purpose of enhancing DUI convictions, regardless of when they were committed.

Amends various statutes to reference the new prior conviction criteria established by the bill.

**ESTIMATED FISCAL IMPACT:**

**Decrease State Expenditures – Net Impact – \$342,600/Incarceration\***

**Assumptions:**

*Simple Possession/Casual Exchange*

- Under current law, a third or subsequent violation for simple possession or casual exchange is a Class E felony. The bill repeals this provision.
- Statistics from the Department of Correction (DOC) show an average of 65.1 admissions each year over the last ten years for felony simple possession or casual exchange.
- Statistics from the DOC show the average time served for felony simple possession or casual exchange is 1.29 years (471.17 days).
- According to DOC, the average operating cost per offender per day for calendar year 2016 is \$67.73.
- The bill will decrease state incarceration costs for simple possession or casual exchange by \$2,077,493.60 (65.1 admissions x 471.17 days x \$67.73).

*Sixth and Subsequent DUI*

- Under current law, a fourth and subsequent DUI offense is punished as a Class E felony. The bill would enhance a sixth or subsequent DUI offense to a Class C felony.

- Statistics from the Department of Safety (Safety) show an average of 456.8 convictions for fourth and subsequent DUIs each year. However, admission data from the DOC shows an average of 110 admissions per year for felony DUI.
- Given that only 24 percent (110/456.8) of all DUI convictions result in incarceration, it is assumed that most offenders serving time for DUI are serving time for a sixth or subsequent felony DUI offense. It is assumed that 50 percent (110 admissions x .50 = 55 admissions) of the admissions are serving time for sixth or subsequent felony DUI offenses.
- The bill will result in 55 admissions per year being enhanced to a Class C felony.
- Statistics from the DOC show an average time served for felony DUI of 1.29 years (471.17 days). The average time served for a Class C felony is 3.22 years (1,176.10 days). The bill will result in each offender serving an additional 1.93 years (704.93 days).
- According to the U.S. Census Bureau, population growth in Tennessee has been 1.12 percent per year for the past 10 years, yielding a projected compound population growth of 11.78 percent over the next 10 years. Population growth will account for six (55 x .1178) additional admissions for a total of 61 (55 + 6).
- According to the DOC, 43.7 percent of offenders will re-offend within two years of their release. A recidivism discount of 43.7 percent has been applied to this estimate to account for the impact of offenders who would re-offend under current law within the additional time added by this bill. It is assumed that the re-offender would have committed the subsequent offense at the same felony level as under current law (61 offenders x .437 = 26.66 offenders).
- The maximum cost in the tenth year, as required by Tenn. Code Ann. § 9-4-210, is based on 34 offenders [61 offenders – 27 (recidivism discount)] serving an additional 1.93 years (704.93 days) for a total of \$47,744.91 (\$67.73 x 704.93 days). The cost for 34 offenders is \$1,623,326.94 (\$47,744.91 x 34).

#### *Prior Conviction Criteria*

- Under current law, DUI convictions in other states can be used to enhance a DUI conviction in Tennessee. *State v. Rea*, 865 S.W.2d 923 (Tenn. Crim. App. 1992). Further, prior convictions for vehicular assault, vehicular homicide by intoxication, aggravated vehicular homicide, and adult driving under the influence are treated as prior convictions for DUI. Tenn. Code Ann. § 55-10-405(c). This limits the application to violations of Tennessee law.
- The bill establishes new criteria for prior convictions that not only adds aggravated vehicular assault to the express list of offenses considered as prior convictions for DUI, but also requires any prior conviction, whether committed in Tennessee or another state, for any offense in which an essential element is that the driver's ability to safely operate or be in physical control of a motor vehicle is impaired by reason of intoxication, whether under the influence of alcohol, drugs, or both.
- The bill will result in (1) additional DUI offense each year being enhanced to a fourth DUI offense that is enhanced to a Class E felony; and (2) additional DUI offenses each year being enhanced to a sixth DUI offense that is enhanced to a Class C felony that would otherwise be punished as a Class E felony.
- It is assumed that the bill will result in two additional admissions for Class E felony DUI

each year and one additional Class C felony DUI each year.

- The average time served for Class E felony DUI is 1.29 years (471.17 days) the average time served for a Class C felony is 3.22 years.
- According to the U.S. Census Bureau, population growth in Tennessee has been 1.12 percent per year for the past 10 years, yielding a projected compound population growth of 11.78 percent over the next 10 years. Population growth will not affect these admissions.
- A recidivism discount applies, but due to the low number of admissions added by this provision of the legislation, the recidivism discount does not impact the incarceration cost for these admissions.
- The two additional Class E felony admissions will increase incarceration costs by \$63,824.69 [(471.17 days x \$67.73) x 2 admissions].
- The additional admission for Class C felony will result an additional time served of 1.93 years (3.22 years – 1.29 years) or 704.93 days.
- The additional Class C felony will increase incarceration costs by \$47,744.91 (704.93 days x \$67.73).

#### *Total Impact to Incarceration Costs*

- The bill will have a net impact of decreasing incarceration costs by \$342,597.06 (\$2,077,493.60 decrease – \$1,623,326.94 increase – \$63,824.69 increase – \$47,744.91 increase).

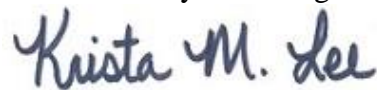
#### *Courts, District Attorneys, and Public Defenders*

- The bill will result in some felony cases becoming misdemeanor cases, and some felony cases will be enhanced to higher felony cases. However, the bill will only create three new felony cases per year.
- It is assumed that the impact of the bill can be handled within the existing resources of the courts, district attorneys, and public defenders.

*\*Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 9-4-210, requires that: For any law enacted after July 1, 1986, which results in a net increase in periods of imprisonment in state facilities, there shall be appropriated from recurring revenues the estimated operating cost of such law. The amount appropriated from recurring revenues shall be based upon the highest cost of the next 10 years.*

### **CERTIFICATION:**

The information contained herein is true and correct to the best of my knowledge.



Krista M. Lee, Executive Director

/trm